UNESCO SOURCES

EDUCATION FOR ALL
MAKING IT WORK

No. 66 - FEBRUARY 1995

FROM BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN BANK

A. Jagadeesh
Nayudamma Centre for Development Alternatives
Nellore, Andhra Pradesh (India)

I read with interest the excellent coverage on Brain Drain (No. 61), and I would like to share my views on this crucial topic in the Indian context.

The dexterity and skill of the population are the foundations of national wealth. Manpower is not only the most important resource for development but it is the objective for all development.

India has the third largEst technical manpower in the world: People trained at high cost in India are drained away by advanced countries contributing to their growth at a time when they are desperately needed for the same purpose at home. To a developing country, it is not only a strain on the financial resources but also a serious threat to successful development efforts.

How could India get the best out of its men that are working in advanced countries, more particularly in the U.S.A., Canada, Germany and England? The answer to the problem is to convert brain drain into a brain-bank, first of all by setting up a Human Resources Bank to collect full information about our scientists abroad.

"Liaison Bureaus" could also be set up in India and in the advanced countries to match the talents of Indians abroad with the tasks relevant to India. Thus avenues may be kept open for the reversal of brain drain and make possible the return of our scientists either as consultants for short or long periods, or be inciting them to come back and set up their own firms in India.

Joint research programmes between scientists in India and those in advanced countries would also be favourable to mobility of personnel, enabling Indians abroad to come and work in our laboratories for given periods. This would also help in obtaining equipment needed by research scientists in Inda.

Many a time, in fact, out-dated and outmoded equipment is dumped in our country in the name of generous bilateral or multilateral aid. This could easily be avoided if our scientists abroad, associated with such programmes, could keep us informed on the latest tools and techniques. Scientists abroad could also be associated in evaluating and choosing technologies for import into India. Similarly, they could be used for "peer review" of our scientific papers and programmes.

Some Indians abroad have become industrialists, consultants or top technologists and research scientists in fields like the environment, waste disposal, solar and wind energy, biotechnologies, computers, electronics, etc. Their suggestions and advice could prove to be of great help in improving the existing industrial set-up in India.

India has already provided incentives and package deals for Indians abroad to set up industries at home. This must be given futher encouragement. We should also make use of our people with business sense as middlemen for marketing our products or for setting up joint ventures, taking advantage of the fact that the American businessman may prefer to deal with an Indian in America talking the same language rather than with an Indian in far-off India. Similarly, Indians abroad could be profitably involved in setting up joint ventures, turn key projects and technical consultancy services for overseas contracts working as consortiums.

To achieve these goals, some of the rigid bureaucratic management styles must give way to flexible, venture-oriented and achievement-oriented styles. To catch a fish, the bait must be attractive.

PERSEVERE !

An Anonymous Parisian admirer

The quality and content of your magazine is at a very high level. Please persevere in providing us with the kind of timely and vital news we find in your pages.

SWEEP IN FRONT OF OUR OWN DOOR!

Marie-Pierre Julien
Retired teacher
Nevers (France)

In your article entitled "No Democracy, No Solution" (Sources No. 64/December 1994), we read *"In Senegal, often held up as a democratic example and where 52 percent of the population are women, only 11 out of 109 MPs are women"* or about 10 percent.

Indeed, if women's participation in public life is considered to be one of the main criteria of a democratic society, what can we say about France where only 5 percent of the Senate (16/321) and 6.1 percent of the National Assembly (35/577) are women.

Frankly, we would do well to sweep in front of our own door before passing judgment on others.

FREELY REPRODUCED

Ildiko Sarkadi
Journalist
Györ (Hungary)

I greatly appreciate your articles which I regularly have translated for reproduction.

THE UN YEAR FOR TOLERANCE

"...Today there are no longer any camps and the world is one. But alongside the joy and hope occasioned by the progress of freedom, democracy and peace, unhappiness continues to advance through the violence of ethnic cleansing, terrorism, cultural and religious extremism, genocide, exclusion and discrimination...

"...From now onwards, the archaic culture of war must yield to the culture of peace - in which the cult of force and the justification of competition will be replaced by the emergence of new horizons of human solidarity, the daily epic of freedom and justice, the sense of fellowship embracing, at once, human beings everywhere and generations to come.

"From now on, humanity must be able to devote itself to the safeguarding, restoration and construction of peace, through the creation of the necessary areas of dialogue, co-operation and reconciliation. There must be an end to violence. Yes to disagreement, no to violence. Yes to discussion, no to violence...

... "From now on, let us decree that citizens should no longer sacrifice their lives but rather live them; that the finest tribute one can pay to the dead of all the wars of this century is to preserve the lives of their children. From now on, in the conscience and behaviour of each of us, tolerance should assume its strongest significance: not simply the acceptance of others with their differences, but a spontaneous movement towards others, to know them better and to know ourselves better through them, to share with them, to extend to them the hand of fellowship and compassion, so that universal values, common to all, are enriched by the precious individuality of every culture and every language, and by the irreplaceable creativity of every person."

Federico MAYOR

(Extracts from the declaration by UNESCO's Director General on the eve of the United Nations Year for Tolerance - December 29, 1994).

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UNESCO SOURCES

BOOKS

INVENTORY OF MONUMENTS AT PAGAN

This fourth volume completes the survey of the southern part of Pagan, former capital of Burma (1044-1287), now Myanmar. Following extensive damage by an earthquake in 1975, the Government appealed to

UNESCO for help. The result, since 1980, has been three projects, financed by UNDP, for the surveying, restoration and rehabilitation of the Pagan monuments. An inventory of the 2,217 temples, pagodas and monasteries that make Pagan one of the great archaeological treasures of Southeast Asia is part of the ongoing Myanmar/UNESCO/UNDP projects. The 317 sites (Numbers 819-1136) described in Volume IV of the 9-volume work include 28 drawings and photos of the large and pentagonal Dhammayazika stupa (No. 947 in the Inventory) a royal foundation from the end of the 12th century, surrounded in the following century by numerous temples and monasteries. The 13th century also saw the foundation nearby of the Hsutaung-pyi monastic complex, completed in the 14th century by the construction of the Thisa-wadi three-storey temple (No. 918). The volume ends with monument 1136, an informal group of monasteries, temples and stupas in the Tamani area.

● ***Inventory of Monuments of Pagan,*** *Volume IV, by Pierre Pichard, Kiscadale/EFEO/UNESCO 1994, illus., maps, 650 FF.*

THE FUTURES OF CULTURES

This book presents results of "The Futures of Cultures," a project aimed at identifying emergent trends and foreseeable changes in interactions between cultural development, cultural identities and pluralistic societies. Six trends are debated and applied to different regional and interregional "cases": globalization of the Western modernization "model", a product of increasing worldwide interdependence; the growing influence of the cultural on the economy, notably in the case of new technologies; the process of uniformization and homogenization of cultures and cultural values; the pluricultural dimension of almost all societies in the more industrialized countries; the rise of resistance phenomena or of cultural affirmation as a reaction to this of "standardization"; and the emergence of new cultures, engendered by scientific and technical progress.

● ***The Futures of Cultures,*** *Future-oriented studies series, UNESCO 1994, 167 pp., 95 FF.*

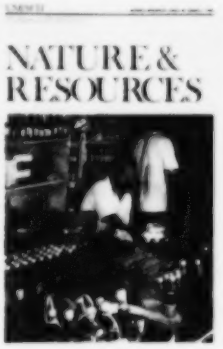
PERIODICALS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE JOURNAL

European Social Science Databases: Their use in cross-national research. Cross-national research in the social sciences requires the exploitation of data in consistent and comparable form, thus development of integrated supra-national databases. In the case of western Europe, such integration began some 30 years ago, and opened to eastern Europe after political division of the region. Database integration has also been achieved through political and economic integration. However, many difficulties remain. This issue reviews both achievements and challenges in the development of European databases in the social sciences. Although it focuses on Europe, it also provides useful landmarks and lessons for other regions, where similar developments are foreseeable.

NATURE & RESOURCES

Traditional knowledge into the twenty-first century. The UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) stressed the vital role in environmental management of indigenous and local peoples because of their knowledge and traditional practices. The World Health Organization (WHO), for instance, finds that 80% of the world's population depend on traditional medicine, herbal remedies and medicinal plants. According to the Rio Declaration, *"States should recognize and support their identity, culture and interests and enable their participation in the achievement of sustainable development"*. To gauge progress in putting the Declaration into practice, this issue (No. 2/1994) examines three key areas: public policy development, emerging information technologies which can lead to a greater awareness of and sensitivity to indigenous knowledge, and institutional adaptation and changes.



THE UNESCO COURIER

The multimedia explosion: Quo vadis? The February *Courier* is devoted to the extraordinary development of the media and the resultant social and cultural transformations. Topics include: freedom of information and its pitfalls, globalization of markets and the risk of two-track communication; interactive networks; and finally, the role of UNESCO in promoting independent and pluralistic media. The issue also features an interview with French writer and philosopher Regis Debray.

RECORDS

MIGUEL ANGEL ESTRELLA PLAYS HOPE FOR CHERNOBYL.

On this special Compact Disc, Argentine-born pianist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Miguel Angel Estrella, plays five Baroque pieces by Couperin, Daquin, Rameau and Haendel, Beethoven's Sonata in D minor, Op. 31 No. 2, "Song Without Summer", by Cedron-Cortazar arranged by Estrella, eight pieces by Chopin and another by Ravel-Villoldo also in an Estrella arrangement. It was recorded by Radio France during a special recital to benefit victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, on October 2, 1994 at the Lyons Opera, and produced by "Musique Espérance," the international humanitarian movement founded by Estrella in 1982. Proceeds from sales of the record will go towards UNESCO's Chernobyl Programme, notably to benefit nine psychological and social rehabilitation centres set up by UNESCO in Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus.

● ***Miguel Angel Estrella raconte l'Espérance.*** *Recorded at a Special Recital to benefit victims of Chernobyl at the Lyons Opera October 2, 1994. Musique Espérance/UNESCO 1994, 100 FF.*

Publications and periodicals are on sale at the UNESCO Bookshop, or by order from UNESCO Publishing, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, and in Member States through national distributors. Catalogue on request.

ROBERT SWAN: SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE SOUTH POLE

Robert Swan, the British Polar explorer, who was named UNESCO Special Envoy for the Environment last December, will lead an international youth expedition to the South Pole as part of the Organization's 50th anniversary celebrations next year.

ROBERT SWAN

"Already as a young boy I dreamed of following in the footsteps of Captain Robert Scott," said Swan who, in 1986 made that dream came true when he and two colleagues were the first to reach the South Pole on foot since Scott in 1912.

Because, on that trip he suffered severe burns from the already thinning ozone layer, he dedicated his next expedition to raising environmental awareness, particularly among young people.

Accordingly, when in 1989 he reached the North Pole, setting another record by becoming the first person to walk to both Poles, Swan involved 22 young people from 15 countries at his base camp where they worked to produce an environmental education video series.

Today at 38, with five books, as many films and half a dozen medals to his credit, Swan has to date delivered over 1000 *"motivational"* lectures not least the Keynote Speech on World Environment Day at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. A Visiting Professor in the School of the Environment at Leeds Metropolitan University, he further reinforced his action in 1993 by setting up the Robert Swan Foundation aimed particularly at bridging the gap between industry and the environment.

For "One Step Beyond" - the UNESCO South Pole Challenge" Swan will lead a 12-member team, including eight young people under 26 from eight countries, on a 71-day journey over 1,440 km from the edge of the Filschner Ice Shelf in Antarctica to the South Pole.

Another 10 youngsters, 14 to 18, from 10 other nations will collect data at the Patriot Hills base camp, then be flown to the South Pole to meet up with the team on arrival.

Swan's approach is resolutely *"positive,"* supportive rather than critical. *"We want to inspire young people by involving them,"* he said, *"and you don't inspire anyone by being negative".*

Viewing his UNESCO Special Envoy role as multiple, he said he hoped *"to play my small part in forging strong links between UNESCO and major corporations".*

Besides this, he is convinced *"the UN itself could use some good positive publicity, a higher profile".*

"Young people especially," he said, *"need to be better informed, to know that the United Nations is not just a collection of armies in blue berets".*

K.V. V. AND B. W.

JOSÉ ZALAQUETT: NOT YOUR AVERAGE EXILE

I was on the low end of Chile's hierarchy of undesirables - just a lawyer messing around, trying to help others. So instead of being killed, I was exiled." Modesty aside, the human rights work which forced José Zalaquett Daher, from his home about 20 years ago brought him to Paris as one of two winners of the 1994 UNESCO Prize for the Teaching of Human Rights, presented at Headquarters on January 26.

The $10,000 prize is awarded every two years for outstanding pedagogical skills in raising awareness of human rights. This year the award was shared with the Philippine Commission on Human Rights in recognition for its effective training of the country's military and police in seeking to prevent abuse.

J. ZALAQUETT
(Photo UNESCO/Inez Forbes)

Zalaquett, 52, a lawyer, professor and legal scholar, ironically saw his career take off after Chili's military coup in 1973.

Working with a legal aid group, he opened his doors daily *"to hundreds of people needing help. Jails and stadiums were packed with political prisoners but we never won a single case. Still, it was a way to affirm human rights,"* he recalls. *"After two years, the government had enough of us."*

Zalaquett was imprisoned and then exiled. He went to the United States, making it easier for his two daughters to visit him, where he taught university classes and volunteered at Amnesty International. Within a year, he was chairman of the organization's highest executive body.

In 1986, Zalaquett was allowed to return to Chili where he found a civilian government faced with a strong military. *"We had to rebuild the country together - without vindictiveness and without forgetting the past suffering. But how?"* Zalaquett points to *"principle and pragmatism."*

He worked on the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation which investigated each of the nearly 3000 deaths and *"disappearances"* reported since 1973.

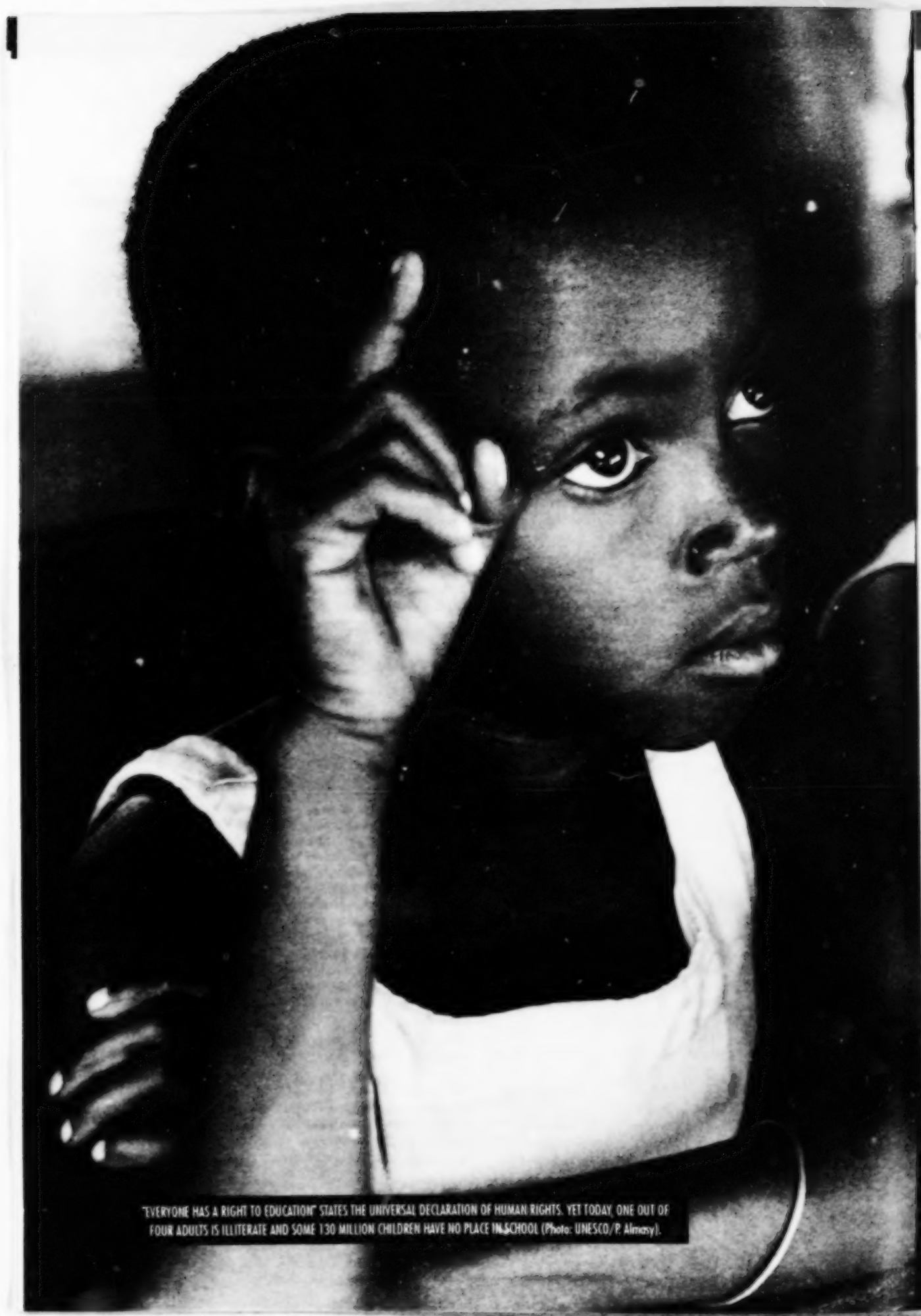
The published findings led to mass demonstrations of intense emotion and anger but relatively little violence; *"it actually turned out to be the catharsis needed to cleanse society."*

Anxious to learn from Chili's experience, officials and activists from South Africa to Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka are looking to Zalaquett as a teacher; a role which he is pleased to fulfill.

"The bad taste of those past years has left me. I lost friends and time with my daughters. But I gained a certain richness from the experience, especially when I think of those killed or left broken... For them and their families, we sought justice without vengeance."

Amy OTCHET

● Singer and actor **CHARLES AZNAVOUR** is Armenia's first Ambassador, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO since it became a member in 1992.
"It is my duty to do everything I can to preserve the culture in which my roots are so deeply embedded", he declared on January 10 at ceremonies during which he presented his credentials to Director-General Federico Mayor. Mr. Aznavour made a special plea for greater tolerance in the resolution of conflicts in 1995, International Year of Tolerance.
Referring to the situation in Armenia and the Caucasus region, he said that *"we cannot continue to live with hate. It's time to turn the page and learn to love again."*
For his part, Mr Mayor expressed satisfaction at *"having a man consecrated to artistic creation"* representing a Member State at UNESCO.



"EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO EDUCATION" STATES THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. YET TODAY, ONE OUT OF FOUR ADULTS IS ILLITERATE AND SOME 130 MILLION CHILDREN HAVE NO PLACE IN SCHOOL (Photo: UNESCO/P. Almasy).

EDUCATION FOR ALL: MAKING IT WORK

The alarming erosion and decline of basic education in developing countries is not only due to cuts in public spending. As this month's FOCUS points out, the problems of education, closely linked with development (pp 12-13) can only be solved through a fresh approach (below) illustrated in our dossier by a selection of "innovative" projects, chosen for their practical, affordable and relevant methods and ideas. Some have risen from the grassroots. Others owe their success to committed people like Father Gerry Pantin, in Trinidad and Tobago (p.9). But whether they involve a women's self-reliance and education movement in Bangladesh (p. 10), an experimental programme for isolated hill tribes in Thailand (p. 11), village schools in Mali (p. 14), family literacy in Senegal (p. 15) or Chili's "900 Schools" (p. 16), these projects are meeting the challenge of education for all and "making it work".

While education systems in many industrialized countries are struggling to meet new demands in times of rapid change, the erosion and decline of basic education in developing countries is a silent emergency.

Economic austerity and political turmoil have often caused severe cuts in public spending for education, especially in the least developed countries. Ill-adapted and costly education structures have been unable to cater to increasing numbers of students and their needs. Many parents, aware that schools are of such low quality that their children don't learn anything useful there, have in turn decided to keep their kids at home so that they can help the family instead.

"The educational problems can only be solved if those responsible for education are prepared to innovate; an educational policy of more of the same will not be enough," says Dieter Berstecher, Director of UNESCO's Secretariat for Inter-Agency Cooperation.

That is why UNESCO, in co-operation with UNICEF, UNDP, Germany and other partners, has launched a major project to promote innovations in basic education. Entitled "Education for All: Making it Work", it is considered by UNESCO as a major thrust to promote practical, affordable, and relevant methods and ideas in developing countries.

The project has three objectives: a) to promote basic education in developing countries through affordable programmes which benefit, in particular, girls and women, children from disadvantaged groups, street children, drop-outs and learners in remote areas; b) to help educational personnel better manage, evaluate and go to scale with promising innovations; c) to increase co-operation and information exchange among developing countries.

FRESH IDEAS

The project is a concrete follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand 1990), which urged educationalists to abandon the *"business-as-usual"* approach to formal schooling. The Conference illustrated that most school systems desperately need an injection of fresh ideas, qualitative improvements and a departure from borrowed concepts.

For many people, the term *"innovation"* may sound fanciful and idealistic. Not so to the advisory group of the project consisting of 12 education specialists from around the world: they stressed that innovations must be capable of solving practical problems, and told the UNESCO team to concentrate on those programmes that manage to find fresh solutions to the chronic problems found in most formal schools in developing countries, such as drop-out, limited participation of women and girls, and low learning achievement.

The project team started with two important assumptions. The first was that innovations should not come from the drawing boards of universities, research institutes or UN agencies, but arise from the inventiveness, experience and dedication of educators, parents and community leaders at the grassroots - often far away from ministries of education in the capitals. The second was that these people do not usually have the necessary contacts, means, and professional exposure to assess, develop and disseminate their own experiences so that others can learn from them.

That is why the project strategy that was adopted emphasizes search and assessment of innovations, effective world-wide dissemination, and *"capacity building"* through workshops, and inter-project visits.

The first phase was launched in 1992, with the gathering of information about various projects through a network of correspondents in developing countries, UN

partners, bilateral agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The networking turned out to be an on-going process, crucial for the relevance of the innovations selected and their diffusion.

In this initial *"search phase,"* information about numerous projects was collected and entered into a database (see box). Out of this world-wide "pool", the project selected particularly successful programmes in Senegal, Mali, Chile, Trinidad, Bangladesh, India, and Thailand for *"showcasing"* through attractive color brochures, and videos.

Says Berstecher: *"Our thinking went like this: Rather than having endless academic discussions on the theory of innovation, why not 'tell the story' of projects that had provided good quality education for disadvantaged groups for whom the formal schools hadn't done much, whether for poor girls in the Indian state of Mararashtra, slum children in Central America, or kids in rural Senegal. We wanted to show the human element in these innovations, pass on some of the enthusiasm, and thereby encourage conventional education planners not just to learn, but to be inspired by these experiences."*

There are currenly five "Making it Work" booklets out, and four more are due for publication this year. Published simultaneously in English and French, they are distributed to various partners such as education ministries, NGOs, and UN Agencies.

"We have received a lot of positive feedback so far," says Morten Fisker, project officer. *"While the projects we highlight are a drop in the ocean of what's out there, our dissemination efforts have opened the eyes of those grappling with education problems, showing them that solutions often exist at their very doorstep."*

One concrete outcome is that a broad network of UNICEF and UNESCO country offices are picking up elements from the showcased innovations, converting them into new pilot programmes. And as nothing can be done without effective partnerships between those who can affect change, the team will also make a special drive to spread the word about innovations among teacher training colleges, curriculum centers and donor agencies.

But the project team is eager to point out that by promoting innovations it doesn't wish to encourage *"alternative, low-cost fringe models"*, parallel to formal schools. Instead, its most formidable challenge is to make formal systems absorb and learn from innovations, and thereby help them become more relevant and effective. A difficult task, as many education systems are characterized by red tape, inertia and unwillingness to change.

"There are many projects that work well on a small scale, but we make a conscious effort to select those that have a capacity for going to scale, and 'infiltrate' the formal school system in a constructive way," says Berstecher. To alert planners and education decision makers, the team invites them to workshops on selected innovations. Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Senegal, and China have hosted such workshops in recent months. Here education officials got a chance to discuss and examine innovations together with people spearheading educational change at grassroots level. While it is too early to evaluate whether the workshops managed to change the thinking of ministry officials, often closed in ivory towers far from the field, the team is optimistic.

"But we must be realistic," says Berstecher. *"An education minister will not be ready to change the status quo in his or her country just because there is an attractive innovation out there. We must show that the new ideas actually work, that they help save money, and that they manage to reach those excluded from conventional schooling. Only in this way can we hope to plant the seeds for change."*

Cilla UNGERTH JOLIS

Called **INNOV**, UNESCO's database on selected innovations in developing countries contains to date concise information on 95 projects of which 21 concern street children. Project selection, an ongoing process, is carried out in collaboration with a network of education specialists, UN partners, bilateral agencies and NGOs. The main educational issues covered in the database are: teacher training, non-formal primary programmes, non-formal education for girls and women, quality improvement in the formal system, community-based education, early childhood programmes, administration and finance and education in remote communities.

UNESCO offices in Bangkok (Thailand) and Harare (Zimbabwe) are currently conducting surveys in their regions for inclusion in **INNOV**. Compatible with INNODATA, the database of the International Bureau of Education, **INNOV** is also widely distributed in a printed version and will soon be available to agencies and individuals on diskette for use with UNESCO'S CDS/ISIS software.

☞ *Basic Education Division, Education Sector*

A selection of 22 videos are now available on innovative education projects in different countries and on various themes. Copies of the videos can be ordered from UNESCO for non-commercial use for a small fee to cover costs of copying, cassette and postage. Free copies can be obtained, in limited number, by institutions and individuals in developing countries.

The EFA **VIDEOBANK** catalogue is available on request. Information on the videos contained therein, and others which are regularly added to the videobank is also available on a database called **VIDED** which to date lists 150 basic education videos held by the Documentation and Information Centre of UNESCO's Education Sector. A resource pool of information about educational topics in general and educational innovations in particular, **VIDED** is available on diskette for use with UNESCO's CDS/ISIS software.

☞ *Basic Education Division, Education Sector*

A CARING TOUCH

"They weren't used to seeing a priest do this kind of work and they didn't think I would stay long..." But Father Gerry Pantin, founder and chairman of the Servol programme, had other plans.

He comes from one of the most important families on the island. His brother is the Archbishop, another is a former Government Minister. But Trinidadian Roman Catholic priest Father Gerry Pantin will tell you that it was when he subjected himself to verbal abuse in the slums just outside the capital city of Port of Spain that he really began his life's work.

His life was turned upside down after the 1970 riots in Trinidad where unemployment and frustration were running high.

Father Pantin was then a science teacher at a prestigious secondary school and prided himself on the community work he did, particularly with the families of his students. The riots, however, made him realize that he was not in touch with the concerns of the masses and that the church had become *"very middle class. I told myself that if I was to continue as a priest I had to specialize in helping the poor, I had to break out of the system."*

So, he changed his priestly robe for a shirt and trousers and started climbing the hills of Laventille, the economically depressed area east of the capital, from which many of the rioters came. *"I just went up to groups of people and said 'My name is Gerry Pantin. How can I help?'"*. He remembers being *"properly cursed"* and labelled an agent for America's secret services. *"I thought about giving up a thousand times"* he admits.

A FOOTBALL

One day, however, a group of youths responded provocatively that more than anything, that they wanted a football. *"I asked myself why I should give them anything after they had just talked about my mother in the worst possible way. But a flash of inspiration came and I told them if they put up half the money, I would get them the football."* The group eventually gathered the money, Father Pantin kept his part of the bargain, and the group had a football.

The organization that grew out of those early efforts still operates on that principle. Father Pantin insists that *"Servol - Service Volunteered for All - is not about hand-outs"*. Its programmes are heavily subsidized, but the participants must make a contribution.

Today, the organization touches the lives of some 20,000 people each year through 148 early childhood centres, 40 "life centres" and direct contact with the community. That touch is a caring one, meant to *"empower"* the disadvantaged so they can shape a better life for themselves.

Servol's Early Childhood Education Programme, for example, develops the creativity and spontaneity of kids aged two to five. Its Adolescent Development Programme, for school drop-outs and those considered *"untrainable"* by the formal school system, is a 14-week course aimed at helping teenagers develop emotionally and spiritually. The Adolescent Skills Training Programme gives trainees the opportunity to learn a trade by working for six to eight months in one of Servol's regional training centres.

Through its Fund Aid programme, Servol also provides loans for graduates starting their own businesses, trains teachers from around the Caribbean in early childhood education and advises parents.

Servol now has a staff of about 600. It is funded through a mix of Trinidad Government grants, local and international donations fees paid by participants, productive work done by participants and its own fund raising activities.

According to Father Pantin, Servol's success is due largely to a three pronged approach based on a *"philosophy of ignorance"* - or not assuming he knows the needs of the poor; listening attentively to the people he tries to help; and applying *"respectful intervention, so that everyone becomes a partner to development"*.

Another of the programme's pillars is the "life centre" concept, that came about largely by accident. Servol built its headquarters in Beetham Estate, one of the depressed communities outside of Port of Spain. This facility housed a vocational training centre for teenagers, a day care centre for babies, and another centre for toddlers. There was interaction among the various centres, and Father Pantin discovered that the facility was taking on the role of a parent substitute and, in some small way, compensating for the defective family life of many of the trainees.

Each of Servol's 40 life centres is now organised to duplicate this model. Participants learn how to bathe and feed babies, how to handle a toddler's tantrums, and how to deal with their own aggression, in addition to learning how to fix cars and prepare a nutritious lunch.

Servol has been so successful that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago asked it to *"adopt"* 50 pre-schools, that now bear the title of Ministry of Education/Servol Pre-schools.

Last year (October 1994), the organization's work gained international recognition when Father Pantin and Servol were named one of the recipients of the Right Livelihood Award in Sweden.

"It is mind-boggling that all this developed from such a small thing." Father Pantin said. *"But there is a saying that nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come"*.

Celia SANKAR
Port of Spain, Trinidad

A SURVIVAL KIT

The Saptagram programme in Bangladesh is all about empowering women, helping them to break out of their traditional isolation and claim a new identity.

One of Rokeya Rahman Kabeer's first moves when she founded Saptagram, was to start education classes for landless women. *"It completely failed,"* recalls the former history professor nearly 20 years later. *"Women weren't interested. They asked us to teach their children."*

What did interest them was gaining access to credit to improve their livelihood. Some 99.4 million people in Bangladesh live below the poverty line. Growing landlessness is slowly deteriorating the social fabric of this country of 113 million, where 80 percent of the population is rural. The 77 percent women's illiteracy rate is one of the world's highest. *"We could have tied our credit programme to education, making it a rule that only those who attended education classes could get credit,"* recalls Ms. Kabeer. *"Instead, we waited for the women to appreciate the importance of education themselves."*

This happened gradually, as women obtained collective loans to start income-generating activities requiring basic accounting skills. Others realized the importance of numeracy when they were cheated of their full wages. Today, Saptagram starts with the formation of a village women's group. Trained field staff approach women, talking to them, listening to their concerns and winning their confidence. This process has hardly changed since the organization's founding in 1976, although at the time, it upset entrenched village interests.

As women discuss what kind of cooperative economic ventures to engage in, they invariably confront some of the taboos governing their lives. *"We want to make women aware they can do everything men can,"* says Kabeer . Thus, women are now tilling land themselves and leasing it. In several villages, they are running successful power-tiller businesses. They have started to sell their produce at the village market, generally regarded as a male sphere. Other women have gained skills in sericulture, one of Saptagram's top income-generating projects.

The need for gender-oriented literacy materials partly sprung from women's changed perception of their situation. The literacy programme designed by Saptagram reinforces women's critical understanding of their lives. It encourages them to question traditions and act in numbers to defend their rights. Through a booklet of 39 key words and phrases related to health, work, religious customs, social and political rights and the environment, women learn the letters that make up words and discuss their meaning. The booklet spells out each word, shows its syllabic structure and presents an illustration to match each one: in one drawing entitled *"Seclusion"* for example, a veiled woman is seen walking with her husband and son. This might lead to a discussion around the tradition of *"purdah"*.

("seven villages") can't keep up with the demand for education among women. At present, 3,500 students are following the curriculum, a fraction of the organization's 22,000-strong membership spread across 900 villages of the Faridpur, Jessore and Kushtia districts.

The syllabus is largely rooted in Saptagram's awareness-raising work that

In Kabeer's eyes, one of the most important pictures in the 76-page primer is entitled *"Address"*, featuring a postman handing a letter to a woman. *"In Bangladesh, women have no identity. You could only write to them care of their husband, their father, brother or another male relative. We managed to get recognition by society, government and police that these women exist."*

Besides receiving letters, women start to write them as well, one of the assignments in Saptagram classes. A more advanced part of the programme develops reading and accounting skills. A book of 15 illustrated stories deals with subjects like the importance of registering a marriage, family planning and procedures for acquiring land.

SOLIDARITY

Working within the parameters of a strict Muslim society, Saptagram has managed to create a sense of solidarity between its members and give them opportunities to break out of their traditional isolation. *"The women who are part of a Saptagram group have shown persistence, courage and determination by maintaining their membership and resisting the oppression of their families and the community,"* states one project evaluation. *"They have demanded changes in their social status and improved their economic condition."*

Saptagram is staffed by women at all levels, from the field to the executive board. Turnover is low. *"We are completely involved with the women's lives, their joys and sorrows. We are like a family,"* says one field worker.

If expanding its education programme for women is one of Saptagram's top priorities, the underpinning of all its actions is to counteract conservative religious and political forces in order to advance the rights of women. Says Kabeer *"Our programme is a survival kit"*.

Cynthia GUTMAN

HEADING FOR THE HILLS

The Hill Areas Education Programme is not just about education in the classroom, it is also about community development and opening doors for a geographically and culturally isolated population.

Upon arriving in isolated mountain villages of Northern Thailand 15 years ago, several teachers belonging to the experimental Hill Areas Education project spent the first days of their mission sleeping under a tree before the village headman welcomed them into his home.

These teachers were the pioneers of a project aimed at developing a community-based education system for Thailand's hill people, a culturally-diverse group of about 500,000 who belong to six main tribes originating from China, Tibet, Myanmar and Laos. Each has kept its own myths and legends, ceremonies, dress style and language.

Dispersed in remote villages located at altitudes above 500 meters, many of hill people do not speak Thai and about half do not have Thai citizenship. One of the prerequisites for obtaining it is to show basic Thai proficiency, another is to have lived in one place for at least five years. But the vast majority of hill tribes reside in a state of permanent insecurity as they have no legal rights to the land they farm, which belongs to the country's forest reserves. Many of these villages can only be reached by an hour-long trek across steep and rugged terrain. Health and nutritional standards fall far below the national average, and rapid population growth is taxing the land they cultivate.

FLEXIBILITY AND SENSITIVITY

During a six-year pilot phase funded by USAID in 45 villages where no schooling previously existed, teachers and a team of experts developed a specialized child-adult primary education curriculum that is now used in 600 villages.

Rather than the term school, HAE prefers to talk about village learning centres, or ashrams, to describe an open house where the teacher lives, classes are held and meetings organized. In some villages, children come to school morning and afternoon, in others, classes only run for a half-day. In the evenings, it is the parents' turn. Thirty-five per cent of the curriculum is devoted to Thai Language and Mathematics, the remaining 65 per cent deals with Life and Social Experiences, a section covering 19 themes relevant to the lives of the hills, from health and the family to farming, forestry and the dangers of opium. The 20th unit leaves the teacher free to organize an activity fine-tuned to the villagers' environment and needs. Textbook illustrations are culture sensitive and teachers often take their students on study excursions to the surrounding fields and forests.

establish people's groups, rice banks, medicine banks, cooperatives and to strengthen and empower village structures," explains Sunee That-thong, a former HAE teacher now in the programme's administration. *"There are obvious differences between communities in the project and those that*

One of the big advantages of the programme is that upon finishing the curriculum, graduates can enter into secondary school, or at any time, pass an equivalency test to continue in the formal system.

"Our main concern is not graduation though. We just provide educational opportunity for all and hope that villagers will be able to take advantage of the knowledge they learn for living," says Dr Suchin Petcharngsa from the regional Non Formal Education centre in the northern city of Lampang. Because HAE provides provides children and adults with the opportunity to read, write and communicate in the Thai language, it has also created a demand for education in villages.

"Parents have become receptive to education because they see how literacy and numeracy can be used in contacts with the lowlands. They feel more confident when they can speak the local language," says Sudarat La-ten, head of the HAE section at the NFE centre in Chiang Mai, the northern region's largest city. Beyond this, HAE aims to improve living conditions in communities by encouraging villagers to take initiatives. *"It works with the community for community development, helps to aren't, in terms of cleanliness, awareness about the environment and drug use, as well as in the village's social organization,"* said NFE Director Kosit Kosansanti.

The Ministry of Education is reviewing the HAE programme. Road construction, tourism and increasing migration from hill tribe villagers to cities have created a complex set of new concerns, including AIDS, prostitution and heroin addiction. A draft proposal is before the Cabinet to revise the curriculum in light of these changes, develop a more effective recruitment policy, provide better vocational training, and extend the revised HAE to 2,500 villages.

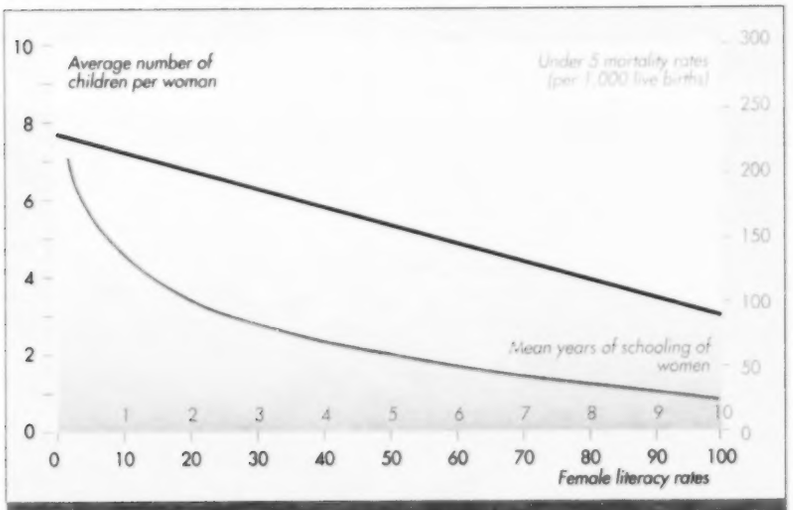
Developing the HAE project for students at the secondary level is also part of the revised package. Says Prasert Chaiphikulsith, from the Tribal Research Institute in Chiang Mai, *"The problem is with the discontinuity in education. When hill tribe children become teenagers, they feel there is no future. Education could prevent many problems like prostitution, migration and unskilled labour if it were more widely available."*

Cynthia GUTMAN

THE CHICKEN AND THE EGG ...

What comes first, development or education? In fact they go hand in hand; education gets better as countries develop, and development picks up speed as the level of education rises...

FEWER, HEALTHIER CHILDREN



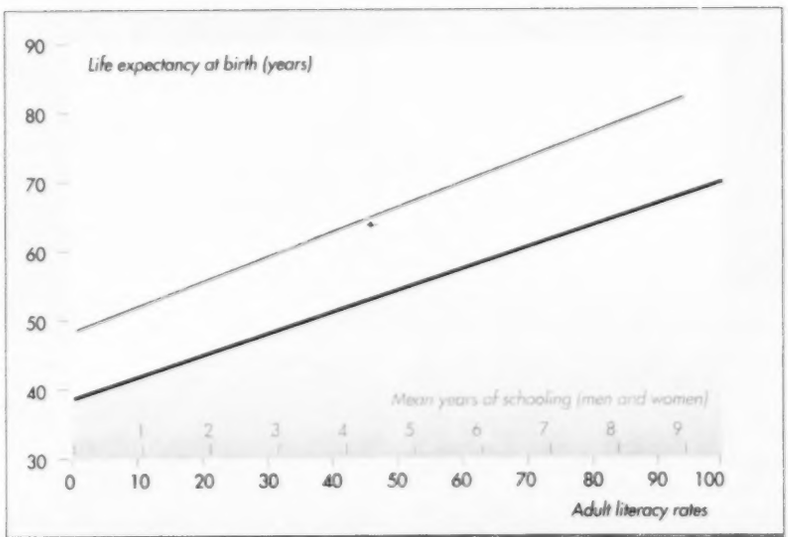
FEMALE LITERACY AND FERTILITY, AND UNDER-5 RATES OF MORTALITY AND MEAN YEARS OF SCHOOLING OF WOMEN (Source: Education for All: Status and Trends, UNESCO, 1993)

Raising the level of female literacy facilitates women's access to information on contraception and planned parenthood. They also become more aware of hygiene and nutrition, which means their children live longer and are generally healthier: evidence indicates that each additional year of a mother's schooling translates into a five to 10 percent drop in child mortality.

This changes the way women think about child-bearing and motherhood and, as the above graph shows, usually leads to a significant drop in fertility.

The trend is especially apparent in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in Asia and the Pacific. In Brazil, for example, illiterate women have an average 6.5 children while those with a secondary education have only 2.5.

LONGER LIVES



LITERACY RATES, YEARS OF SCHOOLING AND LIFE EXPECTANCY (Source: Ibid.)

Statistics also reveal a direct correlation between literacy levels and life expectancy: the more literate the population, the more years of schooling, the longer the life span.

As mentioned above, people who have learned to read and write are more attentive to hygiene and health care; they tend to be less fatalistic and, in the event of illness, more likely to turn to a doctor. Of course, literacy is not the only factor that affects life expectancy. Access to medical treatment, the family's financial circumstances and the social environment are also crucial factors.

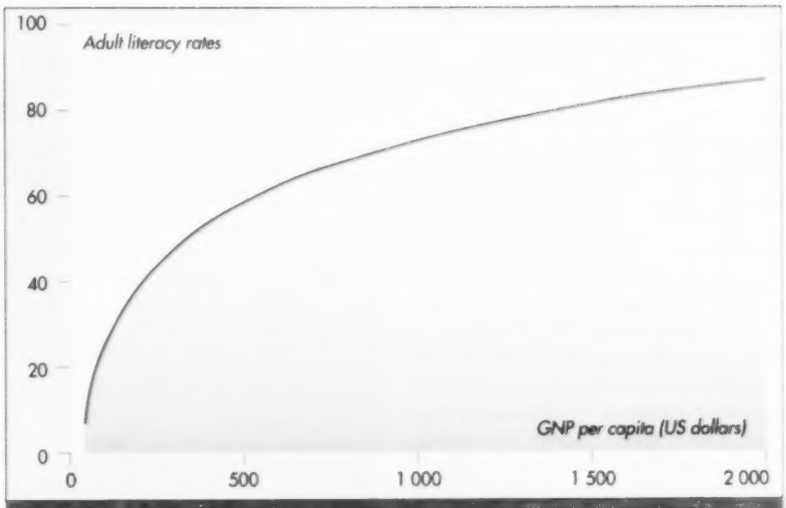
This is clearly shown in such indicators as population growth, health and per capita income. For governments everywhere, education remains a sound investment.

RICHER POPULATIONS

Does an increase in per capita income cause the level of education to rise, or is it, on the contrary, education that enables the economic situation to improve? No doubt it is a two-way process.

National income is, of course, governed by the rate of production. But it is also contingent on factors such as natural resources or population growth: the more mouths to feed, the more thinly spread the benefits of increased production.

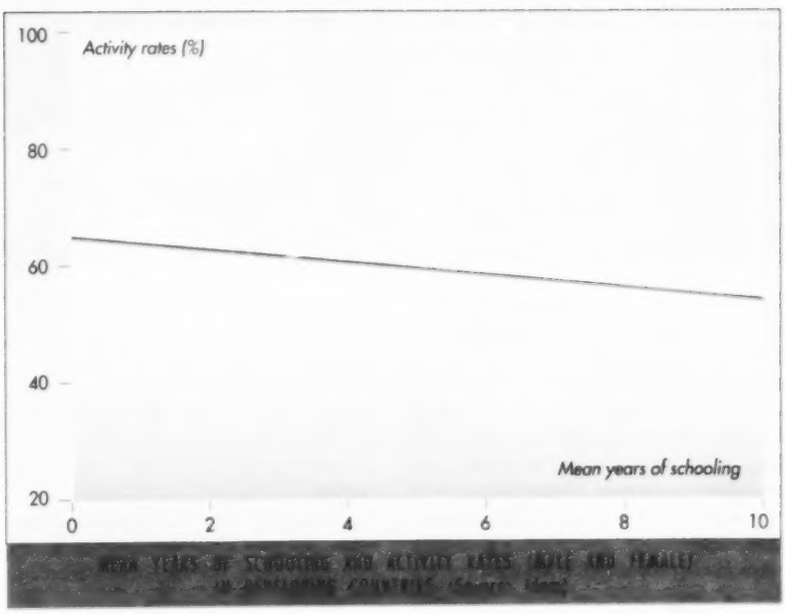
Nonetheless, the statistics show that, generally, better educated populations are also richer ones.



AND YET ...

As this graph shows, there is no great difference between the number of years spent in school and rates of activity. This may reflect on the quality of education: the difficulty of finding a paid job that matches the aspirations nurtured in school and/or university, and the inability to create a paying activity by and for oneself despite all the training received, could mean that the content and standards of education are not relevant enough.

It may also reflect the inroads that modern technology continues to make into the workplace: technology that certainly allows for growth in production, but which replaces rather than creates jobs.



Infography: A. Darmon

THEIR VILLAGE, THEIR SCHOOL, THEIR TEACHER

Mali's village schools bank on the wholehearted commitment of the communities involved - from building the classrooms to paying the teachers and ensuring their children's attendance.

"Guaranteeing a democratic way of life," says Alpha Oumar Konaré, Mali's first democratically-elected president, *"means improving and expanding basic education."*

The figures in Mali, one of the world's poorest countries, are grim. Although a quarter of the national budget is spent on education, the illiteracy rate is nearly 70 percent, less than a fifth of school-age children go to school, and of those who do, more than four-fifths drop out of primary school and only 30 percent of those who make it to secondary school manage to graduate.

And even after all this, and despite the best efforts of children and parents, the choice is often just between unemployment or moving to the town. What's needed, says a government document, is *"to look into new ways to educate, and especially non-formal education."* Things are already moving that way.

When the US section of Save the Children started a development project in 1987 in the Kolondiéba District (9,000 sq kms, 140,000 people, 140 villages), it quickly ran into a big problem. The high illiteracy rate meant the population couldn't make the best use of the things being done to improve water resources, farming, health or banking. The role of schools, even over the long term, was limited by an average attendance rate of only 14 percent.

Save the Children chose to back the traditional methods, but quickly saw they were inadequate and far too slow for the urgent needs waiting to be met. So, using new methods pioneered in Bangladesh, it was figured there was an unfulfilled demand for education, that villages were ready to take responsibility for most of it and that they had the means to do so.

Discussion showed five villages were ready to go. Each would build its own village school and Save The Children would supply building materials and equipment at a thirtieth of the price the government would have charged. They would send their children to the school - girls as well as boys - and pay a small tuition fee. They would pick a literate villager to be trained as a teacher and collect enough money to pay her or him. Save The Children would provide what the village couldn't - training for the teacher, suitable school books and general supervision.

At the beginning, each school offered a three-year course (since extended to six years) for two classes of 30 children each. School lasts two or three hours a day, six days a week and six and a half months a year, arranged around the farming calendar. One of the classes is for six to 10-year-olds, some of whom can then go on to a traditional school. The other is for children from 11 to 15 who will mostly stay on in the village to work. The school is run by a school board made up of village officials, parents of pupils and at least one literate person.

The results have been good. At the end of the first year, 87 percent of pupils knew their ABCs, could do sums and were ready to move up to the next class.

"The children have changed," says one mother. *"They keep themselves clean and they've rediscovered old-fashioned politeness. They ask you for money to buy exercise books and pencils, not sweets. The village school has revived traditional education."*

This is probably one of the reasons why villages think of these schools - because they respond to real needs - as being very much their own, to the point that they're envied by neighbouring villages. Twenty-two schools were set up in 1993-1994 and about 50 more are planned for the next school year. A Save the Children official predicts that by the year 2000, each village in Kolondiéba will have its own school.

A CLEAR COMMITMENT

This success got the ministry of basic education thinking. It began to adopt the same process of negotiation with the community with the same goals - a clear commitment by villagers to pay a teacher's salary, build the school and then run it. The first 20 educational centres for development were opened in 1993-94 in the Koulikoro region. They target children from 9-15 who are either dropouts or who've never been to school and offer them three years of schooling in basic subjects and French, as well as training in fields related to local needs.

The teachers are drawn from the local population and have eight years of formal education themselves. There are also young graduates without a job and retired teachers or officials. Despite the improvements still needed, mainly in teacher training, the unbalanced girl-boy ratio, the age limit for pupils and the working of the school boards, the ministry wants to open 200 such schools.

Is this education on the cheap? Or is it the opposite - giving a minimum of education to those who have no hope of any? Only an in-depth enquiry can decide. But it shouldn't stop at just education. Changing mentalities is very important too. As one teacher says: *"The trust we are given is both an honour and a burden. You have to do really well to deserve it. Failure isn't allowed."*

R. L. and Jean-Pierre VÉLIS

BREAKING THROUGH

Making learning fun is the key to the successful TOSTAN Programme, which is going from strength to strength in rural Senegal.

I had always been frightened of attending school or literacy classes because everyone seemed so stiff and serious... One day I peeked through the window of a TOSTAN class. The women were sitting in a circle discussing leadership and the problems women sometimes have being leaders in our traditional society. Everyone had an experience she wanted to share and the others commented on how she could have handled the situation differently. The discussion was so lively and animated. Two women acted out what they meant. Another woman sang and another danced. I could hardly believe this was a class. The women seemed to be having lots of fun and learning such important things."

This woman went on to become a student in the TOSTAN programme, which aims to make learning fun and immediately relevant: a tool by which people can improve their lives.

Supported by the Senegalese Government, UNICEF and the Canadian International Development Agency, TOSTAN was originally designed for rural women. Men are nonetheless encouraged to join, but classes are usually kept separate to help overcome traditional barriers and feelings of intimidation: in one class of 14 women and two men, for example, the men did all the talking...

PROBLEM SOLVING

We use a *"whole language approach"* geared to problem solving, and explaining the *"hows and whys"*. Instead of labouring over the alphabet for weeks on end, studying the difference between the short 'a' and the long 'a', students start directly on a text - a story, for example, that relates to their lives. In TOSTAN's experience it is only by reading and writing text from the beginning instead of isolated words and sentences, that learners progressively understand syntax and structure. At the same time, a *"literate environment"* is created in the village: signs are posted identifying houses, trees, the health hut or the well. Participants are asked to study the written words and to try to copy them.

The programme, developed out of close dialogue with villagers over 15 years, is firmly rooted in local culture and recognizes that the students already have a store of knowledge and skills that can be built on. We spent a lot of time talking about what people did, what their problems and needs were. We looked at their ways of doing things, their likes and dislikes.

Reading and writing, for example, are often considered by Senegalese women to be negative activities because they tend to

isolate the individual from the rest of the group. TOSTAN "Africanizes" these activities by placing much more importance on reading and writing in groups. If people learn to read in groups, they will naturally continue to read and discuss texts in groups after their classes. In this way, reading becomes apart of their social lives. Likewise, writing collective texts has produced rich results and allowed weaker students to express themselves and make considerable progress by working with others. Games, songs and theatre based on traditions also encourage participation.

The results of the 18-month programme in different regions of Senegal and in different national languages (Wolof, Pulaar, Mandinka and Serer) have been very positive. After studying health care and problem solving skills in the TOSTAN basic education programme in the mid 1980s, the women of Saam Njaay - a drought-stricken Sahelian village of about 300 inhabitants - decided to start a garden to provide vegetables for their families and buy basic necessities with the sale of their produce. The women have used their literacy, numeracy and management skills to ensure its success in the years since. They now have water in the village, enough food for the dry season, a profitable mill and a self-financing dispensary. They follow the nutritional status of their children, keep records and detect problems.

INDEPENDENCE

More than 15,000 villagers have been or are now enrolled in the TOSTAN programme which costs about $50 per student. Detailed guides for trainers, facilitators and participants assure their independence after the first cycle of training.

We are now adapting the programme for adolescents, to prepare children who otherwise would not benefit from any formal schooling to live productively in their own environment. The first classes are opening in villages where parents have already received a basic education thus creating family literacy in the true sense of the expression.

TOSTAN means *"breakthrough"* in Wolof. Participants at one workshop interpreted this as meaning that while in the classroom they can learn in a warm, nurturing environment like that of the chicken's egg. When they have new knowledge, experience and confidence, they are ready to *"break through"*, and walk on their own two feet. *"But"*, they exclaimed *"we also have the duty to provide others with the same opportunity as we have had!"* This is now happening. In the Kolda region, TOSTAN members in the village of Medina Cherif recently opened 20 new classes in 10 surrounding villages with 600 participants. The participants funded the project and built the classrooms and furniture. Former students are new facilitators and conduct sessions in the lively TOSTAN style, helping others to help themselves.

Molly MELCHING,
TOSTAN Project Director,
Senegal

"EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS"

Positive discrimination is the main tactic behind Chile's 900 Schools Programme.

At first sight, Chile's education record is one of the most enviable in Latin America: almost 94 percent of the population is literate and more than 96 percent of children between six and 14 are enrolled in school, where they are likely to remain for an average of 7.5 years, just below the compulsory eight. Chileans tend to value education highly: it is seen as a passport to better living conditions and eventual participation in the country's social, economic, cultural and political life.

But a closer look shows very uneven results, especially in poor areas. Students may complete primary school, but many leave without being able to read, write or do simple sums. To counter this, a programme of "positive discrimination" - known as the 900 Schools Programme - was set up in 1990, targeting schools in poverty-stricken urban and rural areas where the quality of teaching and learning was particularly low.

The aim was to tackle the physical, pedagogical and psychological issues blocking quality learning, and to make the school a vital part of the community.

To start with, $4 million dollars was spent improving the schools selected for the programme, most of which were dilapidated and lacking any basic teaching supports. Classrooms were painted, broken windows repaired and bright new furniture supplied. New text books in language, maths, natural and social sciences were provided, and small classroom libraries were set up for first and second grades. Special materials, including games designed specifically for the programme, were distributed to back up traditional teaching methods and children's songs, poems, proverbs, stories and jokes were used heavily in reading lessons.

Weekly in-service training workshops were organized to motivate and improve the teachers' performance. Rather than stand up in front of the class and dictate lessons, they were urged to take a more interactive and creative approach, paying attention to the social and cultural background of their students.

EXCHANGE CRITICISM

"To have a forum where teachers can talk about their basic role and reason for being in the establishment is very precious. Communication between the teachers is enriched and strength gained from exchanging positive criticism," says supervisor Francisco Roa.

Workshops were also established for small groups of students with learning difficulties in third and fourth grades. These were run by young tutors chosen locally by the school. In this way *"a link was created with the community"* explains the programme's first coordinator, Mr. Garcia-Huidobro. The idea was to raise the children's self esteem, creativity and sense of responsibility. *"These children feel worthless, marginalized and classified as weak"* says one of the young monitors. *"We treat them as people and show them they are valuable to us, their family and the community. For us, the challenge is to change their attitude, to make them value themselves and see that they are capable of doing things."* The tutors communicate with the school director and teacher and establish a relationship with families, paying regular visits to keep them up to date on the children's progress.

The results of this concerted effort have been remarkable. Children are getting better grades, and their attitudes and aspirations have changed.

"Before, I was always alone, sometimes in the street. I felt like hitting my classmates," says Hector Encheverria who joined the programme at his school in third and fourth grade. *"In the workshops, I made friends and was kinder towards them."* Hector wants to be a paramedic when he grows up. His classmate, Nataly, wants to be a teacher.

The project, made possible by a $14 million start-up grant from Sweden and Denmark, has lifted Chile's strict and formal education system out of a straightjacket.

The programme's principles - flexibility, the involvement of new partners such as non-governmental organizations and whole communities, permanent monitoring and the *"positive discrimination"* towards underprivileged children - have been drawn in to the new Basic Education Programme and are being applied nationwid.

Education has now become - as one of the programme's slogans runs - *"everybody's business"*. ■

TO FIND OUT MORE ...

EDUCATION FOR ALL - MAKING IT WORK INNOVATIONS SERIES: illustrated 32-page booklets on successful educational programmes including: "Children Can Learn", on Chile's 900 Schools Programme for the Underprivileged (No. 1); "In Our Own Hands" describing Saptagram in Bangladesh (2); "Within Reach" featuring Propel in India (3); "Blazing the Trail" about Mali's village schools (4) . "On the Right Track" about Servol in Trinidad & Tobago (5). "Breaking Through", based on TOSTAN in Senegal, will be available in March.

EFA "MAKING IT WORK" VIDEOBANK: features 22 videos on diverse educational projects (see box, p. 8).

EFA 2000: a quarterly bulletin covering the difficulties and progress made in the global drive towards education for all.

STATUS AND TRENDS 1994: the second report in the series, highlights, through a graphic presentation, the ways in which education contributes to human development. 47 pp.

WORLD EDUCATION REPORT: a broad but concise analysis of major educational trends and policy issues with key data on more than 170 countries as well as summary tables by major world region. UNESCO, 1993, 172 pp.

EDUCATION FOR ALL: PURPOSE AND CONTEXT, AN EXPANDED VISION, THE REQUIREMENTS: three monographs presenting the principal themes discussed at the EFA World Conference held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. UNESCO, 1991.

Reference tables
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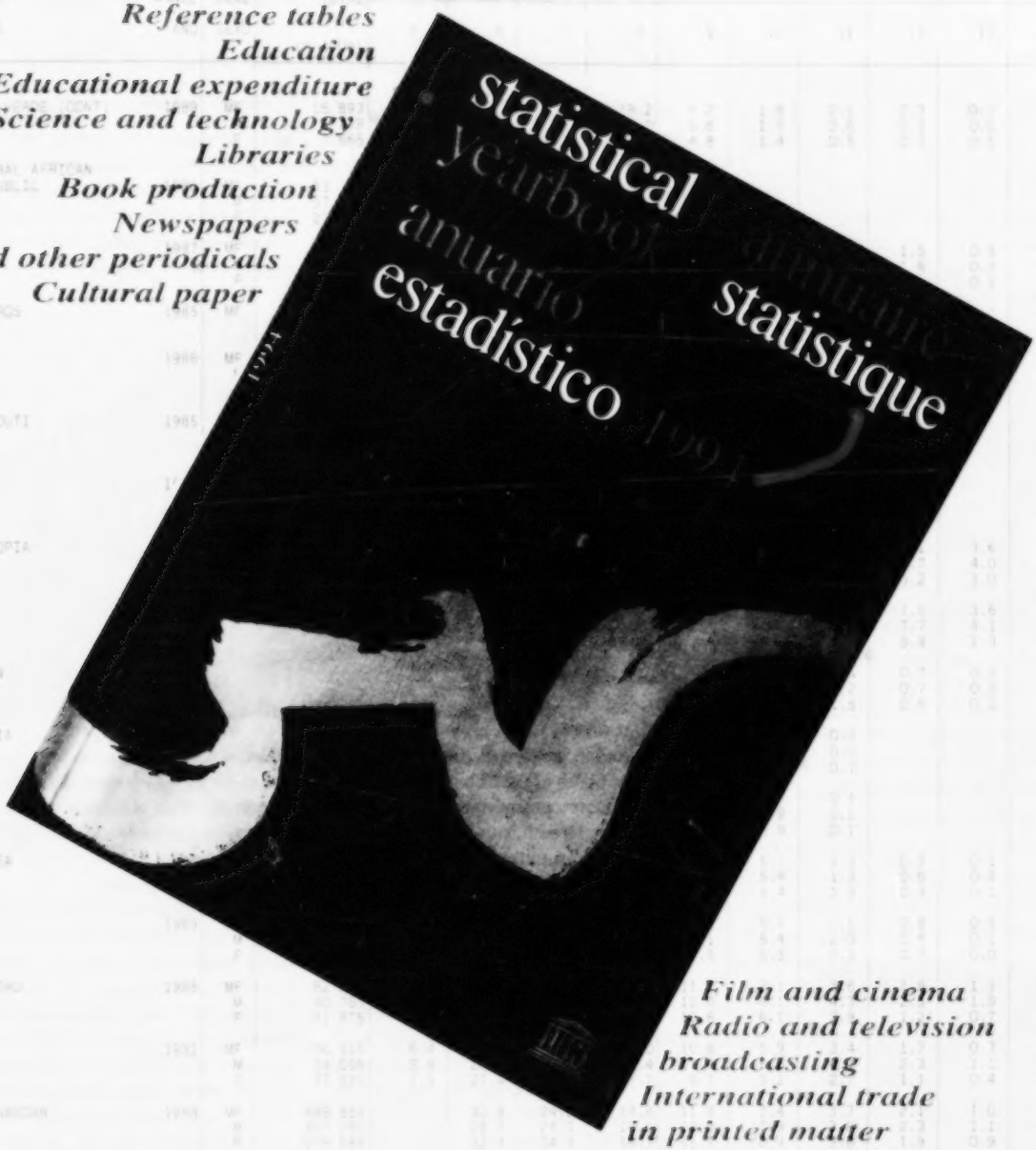
Educational expenditure
Science and technology
Libraries
Book production
Newspapers
and other periodicals
Cultural paper



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OPENING UP OR CLOSING IN?

Arab intellectuals reflect their societies: divided on "projects" to bring their civilization into the "modern" world.

"How can the Arab world be restored as a dynamic, creative region on a level not only with the global economy, but also with its standards and values?"

This was the question posed by Algerian sociologist Nadji Safir at a Regional Consultation in Muscat (Oman) for Arab Member States of the Commission on Culture and Development[1] in Muscat (Oman) on January 10 and 11.

The Arab intellectuals and decision-makers at the meeting found that their answers only led to more questions: should Arabs work with the West? and what principles should guide development in the Arab world?

"We have two main schools of thought," said Anwar Abdel-Malek, an Egyptian sociologist and political scientist. *"Those who want to integrate the new U.S.- dominated world order, and those who see that as just another attempt to put us under Western domination."*

Abdel-Malek, who shares the second view, says people are rightly suspicious of the obsession of Europe and the U.S. with the Arab world because of its oil wealth and *"its geo-political position at the junction with Asia - home of two-thirds of humanity."*

"The West doesn't want Arabs to fulfill their dreams of unity and economic and social progress," he says. *"It's crushed all the major Arab renaissance movements since the beginning of the 19th century. Look at how the modern industrial and scientific state of Mohamed Ali in Egypt, coinciding with an intellectual golden age, was destroyed by the European powers."*

"Then, when middle class liberals tried to build modern states, the same foreign powers installed minority parties in power. When our countries joined the movement for Arab unity around Nasserism and Baath, the West declared war on them. That's why Arab societies have fallen back on fundamentalism, whether it be religious, nationalist or cultural."

The crisis of the West's model makes things worse, says Abdel-Malek. *"Rabid individualism, discontented youth, social problems and high suicide rates strongly impress the Arab world, which sees the West as faltering, materialistic and damaging to the spiritual values of others".*

"The main Arab schools of thought and action spring from sectors of society which reject submission to the West, such as the Nasserites - who still have many followers - the nationalist-communists and the fundamentalists. All of these have a vision of society based on a long-term, inherent Arab ingenuity. They're also aware that the historical initiative has shifted from the Atlantic to Asia, where examples of spectacular economic growth are tied to maintenance of strong cultural values," Abdel-Malek says.

"The Arab world shares some of these values - social justice, peaceful co-existence, personal creativity and a return to philosophy (not just religion) as a force

●

Trekking through the mountains of northern Thailand (Jan. 5 - 12), about 50 scientists, rangers and anthropologists from six South-East Asian countries explored approaches to natural resource management by visiting three forestry projects. The highlight of the meeting, which was organized under the **UN WORLD DECADE FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**, was a visit to the Mae Chaem district where shamans are fusing spiritual beliefs with sound environmental principles by dividing forests into three parts: the first protected as a sacred place; the second where only certain trees are cut; the third which is harvested and re-planted.

▼

Musicians, singers, dancers and actors, Afro-American, Australian, French or Swiss, came together at Headquarters on January 14 for the 7th jazz festival in ***"HOMMAGE TO MARTIN LUTHER KING"***. Each year the Harambé Association recalls Pastor King's tragic assassination in 1968. Martin Luther King, said Francine Fournier, Assistant Director-General for Social Sciences, *"told us that the greatest freedom of all is freedom from hate"*.

MUSICIANS MRA OMA AND FRED BURAM (Photo Harambé).

behind political life. These are possible points of agreement to be built on. That's why there's a movement to revive the Bandung spirit."

But for Algerian sociologist Nadji Safir, cooperation with Europe is vital for the Arab world, despite the dark burden of history. The region should not get involved in the America-Asia rivalry, he insists but move closer to Europe to help avoid new polarisation in the world.

Safir says that *"if you look at Arab history, Arabs have produced values, science and a model of civilisation when they've been open to the world and played a key role in international exchange".*

To attack a *"cultural invasion by the West"* is pointless, he says, even if it is so. Modern means of communication can't be combatted by any individual or law. So the best way to assert oneself is to take part in cultural production. Arabs have plenty of material. It's ridiculous that Aladdin comes back to us via Walt Disney.

"The Arab world's crisis is mainly an intellectual one," he says. The books of Ibn Rushd have been burned and the historian Ibn Khaldun[2] marginalized. *"Arabs have written off production and the exchange of standards and values, yet buy Western goods and technology without batting an eyelid. We have to resolve this contradiction."*

LOOK AT THE ALHAMBRA

Safir provocatively calls for self-criticism. *"We should look at the Alhambra and ask ourselves why the civilization that produced it is today in the business of crushing intellectuals."* The Arab world, he says, should examine its heritage and its history realistically, including its contribution to the culture of Europe. *"It's crazy to reject European values as foreign when we ourselves have helped to create them. Rejecting the West means rejecting the Arab thinkers and scientists who've been assimilated by Europe."*

It would seem to be best, as one Omani participant pointed out, to take a selective look at Arab culture and preserve the things which favour progress - demystify it, in fact.

Yemen's deputy information minister, Amet al-Alim al-Soswa, wants Arabs to shake off the *"backward-looking"* view of their heritage. If they do not, she says, *"it'll turn into a cemetery."*

Arab leaders are to blame for the Arab world's underdevelopment, she says, since they have done nothing to encourage Arab-Muslim values which favour development, such as a sense of social justice, of work properly done and a sense of the family. Each country should also draw on its local culture.

"The Arab world is so culturally diverse that a single Arab-Islamic culture doesn't in fact exist," she says. *"Can we admit that to ourselves?"*

Ali bin Mohsin Hafidh, head of school curricula at the Omani education ministry, rejects all this. *"Arab culture is Islamic culture and vice-versa,"* he retorts. *"Everything is contained in Islam. Concepts such as democracy and human rights are OK but can't be applied in the Arab world because they're Western values."*

Not so, replies Sudanese writer Tayed Salih. *"Respect for rights of the individual is at the root of Islamic thought,"* he says. *"Those who reject so-called 'Western values' are politicians, not thinkers. They're using Islam to gain power, so they have to pretend it's different.*

The Arab world is very pro-Western because of its history and its geographical position. When it isn't, it's for special reasons - the pain of the post-colonial era, but also because it gets the feeling it's not being allowed to sort out its problems in the way it wants."

But Tayed Salih is hopeful: *"I think the world is beginning to see that peaceful coexistence isn't possible unless cultures, beliefs and differences are respected. If the West wants to help Arabs, it should go about it the right way. Not by backing repressive regimes because they happen to serve the West's short-term interests."*

Sophie BOUKHARI
Muscat

1. The commission was jointly set up by the United Nations and UNESCO in late 1992. Headed by former UN Secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar, it has been asked to help work out new approaches to development which incorporate a cultural dimension. It will submit its final report at the end of this year.

2. A 14th century Arab historian and philosopher considered one of the earliest sociologists.

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UNESCO's 1994 EDUCATION FOR PEACE PRIZE was awarded to Thai Buddhist philosopher and monk, Venerable Prayudh Payutto, at Headquarters on December 20. The international jury singled out this year's recipient for his *"original approach"* to peace education, centred on *"inner peace and the responsibility of the individual for the resolution of social, economic and moral problems"*. The $25,000 Prize, set up in 1980 through a grant from the Japan shipbuilding Industry Foundation, is awarded each year for *"a particularly outstanding activity designed to alert public opinion and mobilise the human conscience in the cause of peace."*

THE VENERABLE PRAYUDH PAYUTTO (Photo UNESCO/Michel Claude).

▼

"Our religions must not identify themselves with political, economic, or social powers, so as to remain free to work for justice and peace.
This was the commitment made by some 60 leaders of the world's 15 largest religions at a meeting on ***"THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS TO THE CULTURE OF PEACE"*** organized in Barcelona (Spain) from December 12 to 18 by UNESCO and the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia. Recognizing that *"religions have contributed to peace, but have also led to division, hatred and war,"* the religious leaders pledged to *"remain mindful that our religions must not identify themselves with political, economic or social powers... We should distinguish fanaticism from religious zeal"*. The "declaration of Barcelona" will be distributed in UNESCO's 183 Member States to encourage further signing.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Like food and water, Sarajevo needs objective news coverage which NTV 99 is ready to provide with UNESCO's assistance.

Good news for Sarajevo. The war continues with sniper fire and shortages but for the first time in three years the city's residents can tune into an independent television station. NTV 99 started broadcasting February 1 with UNESCO's humanitarian assistance.

Nine months ago, Adil Kulenovic, director of the staunchly independent radio station Studio 99, asked UNESCO's Klaus Schmitter for help in finding TV cameras. Sarajevo already has two TV stations, one controlled by the Bosnian government and a second supported by Saudi Arabia, but neither provide the objective news coverage urgently needed during a war, according to Kulenovic.

UNESCO has several programmes assisting independent media. But with NTV 99, *"we insisted that the support be recognized as humanitarian assistance, like food and water,"* says Schmitter. The Organization raised about $400,000 by coordinating donations from the European Union and European governments including about £100,000 (about $158,000) from the United Kingdom. The station depends *"neither on the support of the Bosnian government nor that of an outside country,"* says Schmitter - a key point - because *"given the nature of independent media, they will, one day, have trouble with the government."*

But before dealing with any political friction, NTV 99 had some technical details to work out. With the erratic nature of Sarajevo's cease-fires, NTV's studios are underground, with just the antenna protruding. The TV and radio stations have generators to get through electrical blackouts.

A DELICATE PROBLEM

The station is starting with two hours of news and survival information each day. The team of 52 journalists and technicians (all part of Studio 99) are looking to the help of foreign networks in offering a broad range of children's educational shows, local and international news and movies.

"There is a more delicate problem," says Kulenovic. *"Certain political forces are resorting to Islam to make up for their inability to come up with a real platform. Given conditions brought on by the war and the lack of perspectives, it's logical that religion exercises a certain influence and is used as a political weapon. But this has made basic values - family and marriage, food and education- political issues."*

Kulenovic is referring to growing pressure on women to cover themselves in public and the scorn aimed at couples in mixed marriages. He is convinced that *"certain political groups"* are moving towards the *"principle of ethnic division and the introduction of ghettos"*.

NTV 99 and Studio 99 are opposed to extremists and nationalist parties on all sides, says Kulenovic. Studio 99 has rejected a decree by the Minister of Education and Culture, Enes Karic, prohibiting broadcasts of Serbian and Croatian singers as well as Bosnian singers who have fled the country.

NTV 99 is committed to *"spreading Bosnia-Herzegovina's traditional way of life - its diversity and tolerance between different religions, nations and cultures."*

A.O.

● The **YEAR OF PASTEUR**, marking the centenary of the eminent French scientist's death, was inaugurated in a ceremony at Headquarters on January 17. Hommage to *"this giant of science, peace and wisdom"* was paid by UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor at the ceremony attended by representatives of 80 countries. During the year, six scientific and public health symposia, in New York, Tahiti, Rio de Janeiro, Dakar, Hanoi and Paris, will focus on the importance of Pasteur's discoveries and recall, as he insisted, that *"science has no country, because knowledge is the heritage of all humanity"*.

▼ *"It takes a village to educate a child,"* goes an African proverb. Under the title ***"RETHINKING THE SCHOOL,"*** the bulletin EFA 2000 devotes its issue No. 17 to African-driven initiatives reflecting the tradition of community involvement in providing education linked to local needs. After an overview of basic education concepts, policy and planning, the bulletin presents projects offering solutions at the local level: village schools in Mali, education for girls in Botswana, and a literacy programme in Senegal (see our dossier pp. 6 to 16).

● *"Uniqueness and universality in a biological world"* was the theme of a symposium sponsored by and held at UNESCO from 10-12 January. Organized by the **WORLD SCIENCE INSTITUTE**, it gathered 30 researchers to debate the promise and danger of scientific advances in trying to *"distinguish the biological basis of a person's individuality"* and review contributions in genetic variability, the neurobiological basis of personality and the links between biological uniqueness and individual ethics.

WORKING WOMEN

Women everywhere are better educated, have fewer children and, increasingly but often reluctantly, a paid job.

"When women go beyond the home, when they go beyond the role of child-bearer, they are given a different value." For Betty Friedan, mother of the feminist movement in the United States, a job is one of the key steps towards women's emancipation and empowerment.

Perhaps in the West, but not necessarily elsewhere, pointed out her fellow participants at a UNESCO organized meeting on Women and Culture, held at Headquarters from January 16-18.

In most parts of Latin America, for example, the numbers of women in the workforce doubled between 1959 and 1990. However, says Mexican sociologist and demographer, Dr. Mercedes Pedrero, most of these women are forced to work to help their families make ends meet. And rarely do their jobs lead to any promotion of their social status.

"The jobs available for women are in sectors where labour is cheap and the work demeaning," explained Dr. Pedrero. And the *"globalization of the economy, that has put Latin American workers into competition with those from South East Asia"* means that it's these sorts of jobs that are increasingly available.

A SOURCE OF SHAME

In Pakistan *"men are supposed to protect women and take care of their families needs. The fact that a woman has to seek employment is a source of shame,"* says activist Ms Fauzia Rauf. Women would rather say that they are taking a course in town to improve their education than admit that they are going to work in offices or factories to help the family finances.

According to a recent study, 78 percent of working women in Pakistan see more disadvantages than advantages in their jobs. Among their complaints are physical fatigue, the difficulty of fulfilling household tasks, the lack of free time and the negative image society attaches to working women. *"The fact that more women are working has done little to change the deeply rooted attitudes of the patriarchal society,"* said Ms. Rauf.

In the Republic of Yakutie (eastern Siberia), *"86 percent of women have a job"*, explains Ms Anastasia Bozhednov, head of the Presidential Commission on the Family in the Republic of Yakutie. *"This is one of the highest rates in the world. But almost 56 percent of these women would prefer to work half-time so as to have more time free for their home and family,"* she told the meeting.

Nonetheless argued Ms Friedan, work remains an important way to take women beyond their maternal role. However, she said, *"although we are heading towards a global economy, we must avoid creating a situation where men and women compete for jobs"*.

WOMEN AT WORK IN A CANDY FACTORY IN EL SALVADOR
(Photo UNESCO/Dominique Roger).

"The new challenge for the feminist movement is to seek answers to the difficulties confronting both men and women," she said. *"We need to invent a new definition of work which would give priority to activities in the service of the community. It is not enough to concentrate in the oppression of women by men or to simply push for equality in employment. We need a broader range of options for both men and women. They must work together, guided by a new vision of society."* ■

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President Jean Bertrand Aristide and UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor, signed a memorandum of cooperation in Port-au-Prince on January 19 to help strengthen **DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI**. The memorandum provides for UNESCO help: in facilitating national reconciliation; carrying out a National Education Plan; preservation of the cultural heritage; training of media professionals; and the development of a national strategy for computerization. UNESCO will also participate in the development of renewable energy sources, the environment, hydrology and the reduction of natural disaster risks.

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KING JUAN CARLOS OF SPAIN AND JIMMY CARTER, former President of the United States, are the winners of UNESCO's 1994 Félix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize. An international jury, meeting at UNESCO Headquarters on January 10, chose the laureats for their contribution *"to the respect of minorities and the transition to democracy"*. Created in 1989, the Prize honours individuals, associations or institutions that have made a significant contribution to promoting, seeking, safeguarding or maintaining peace.

●

"IS THERE A PEDAGOGY FOR GIRLS?" was the theme of a colloquium organized by UNESCO and the Institute of Education at London University from January 10 to 12. At the meeting, 18 specialists from eight countries took as point of departure the fact that while access to education was becoming more equitable, differences in the treatment of boys and girls continued to be discriminatory, and in most countries favoured boys. Participants considered the issue with regard to science and technology education, mathematics, information technologies, etc., and examined a number of case studies. Their reports and scholarly papers will be published in book form later this year.

VIRUNGA'S EMOTIONAL RESCUE

How do we protect the environment during a humanitarian crisis?

The decision in December to put Zaire's Virunga National Park on the List of World Heritage in Danger raised emotional questions lacking easy answers. Rwandan refugees were ravaging Africa's first national park, one of the world's last mountain gorilla reserves, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979. But given the refugees' suffering, how could anyone restrict their efforts to survive?

"You cannot compare things like that. All priorities must be placed on saving people," says Mankoto Ma Mbaelele, Director General of the Institut Zairois pour la Conservation de la Nature (IZCN). *"But we must have a global vision - the park's biodiversity benefits everyone - where is the contradiction in saving both?"*

Bordering Rwanda, the park was a logical destination for Rwandans fleeing the massacres last June and July. In a week, nearly one million people streamed across the Zairean border to camps infested with cholera. As agencies and NGOs tried to cope, they inadvertently triggered a second crisis- that of the environment. *"Defecation zones"* were set up in the park where cadavers and medical waste were also left to rot, putting the wildlife at risk of disease. According to a UN Development Programme (UNDP) report, about 40,000 refugees were collecting between 579 to 772 tonnes of the park's forest products daily. By November, almost 20,000 hectares had been partly or completely deforested.

"Out of solidarity and humanism, Zaire opened its doors to the refugees but later there was a certain feeling of regret...," says Mbaelele. IZCN and the World Heritage Centre began working with NGOs to monitor the wood taken and find alternative fuel sources. But according to UNDP, Rwandan militias and *"Zairean army trucks were regularly seen bringing wood out of the park to Goma for sale to refugees and the relief organizations."*

A SPOOKY SITUATION

"Total anarchy," explains Harold Eidsvik of the World Heritage Centre. *"We are talking about a spooky situation in which unequipped park rangers are faced with the new guns of militias."* After meeting with military leaders, Mbaelele bolstered park security with $40,000 sent by the Centre to hire more guards and equip them with radios and weapons. *"But a lasting political solution is needed so that the refugees can go home,"* says Mbaelele.

Virunga joins 17 other sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger which range from Angkor in Cambodia, to Dubrovnik and Plitvice in Croatia. *"Putting a site on the (endangered) list is seen by some as a black mark but we take a more positive approach by using it as an alert,"* says Eidsvik. *"It's easy to be pessimistic with about 20 wars raging in Africa,"* admits Eidsvik. But there are alternatives. Rome, a *"free city"* during World War II, was spared from the fighting. A *"Green Beret"* unit for the environment is another *"interesting idea but difficult to negotiate,"* says Eidsvik. Few states are willing to discuss sovereignty.

A.O.

NO PLACE ELSE TO GO (Photo Mankoto Ma Mbaelele).

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UNESCO AND RHONE-POULENC signed a partnership agreement on January 25, to preserve historical monuments by fighting termites which attack the woodwork of temples and other ancient buildings in warm and humid countries. In restoring three buildings in the Vietnamese Imperial City of Huè, Rhone-Poulenc, the multinational chemicals group, will contribute FF1 million and train Vietnamese technicians. A second project, involving 25 countries, will develop and test materials teaching high school students to appreciate and protect cultural and natural heritage.

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Historic city centres and the modern city, coexistence or confrontation? Addressing this question, conservators, architects, engineers and archaeologists from 15 countries met in Fez (Morocco) from January 15 to 20. At the centre of debates: the ***ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN HERITAGE*** of medinas. Participants stressed solutions based on the surrounding living conditions and urban planning requirements.

FEZ (Photo UNESCO/Dominique Roger)

THE MOST INTOLERANT OF ARTS

Cinema could help spread the message of tolerance, but ...

1995: the 100th birthday of the cinema industry and the International Year of Tolerance. To mark the two events, UNESCO organized a festival of restored or rediscovered films (Jan. 10-22) on the theme of tolerance - from the 1911 version of Pinocchio by Italian director Giulio Anatamoro, to Raymond Langford's Australian classic "A Sentimental Bloke" (1919). However, for French art critic André Parinaud the big box office hits in cinema history have all capitalized on humanity's intolerance.

"The cream pie pushed into Hardy's face by his tormentor Laurel is the perfect image of gratuitous intolerance. Then there's the cop who persecutes Charlie Chaplin...

"People don't laugh at nice things, but rather that which annoys others or puts them down. A comedian has no principles and his public, invited to be likewise, chooses to laugh - albeit hypocritically. That's the gamble that underpins the act of comics from Groucho Marx to Louis de Funès. We laugh at misfortune.

"It's undoubtedly America's ongoing guilt that produces Westerns which vaunt the heroic conquest of the frontier, a pioneering era where courageous cowboys battle cruel and savage Indians. Law and order is the sheriff with his star, a lone, decent, sober figure, supremely confident that right is on his side.

"With Fred Zinnemann's 'High Noon' in which a community overcomes its fear, and Richard Brooks' 'The Last Hunt' where the good guys fight against the racism of bison hunters, the "good savage" develops: the starved Indian who, having lost his lands and his freedom, can only regain his dignity by revolt (Delmer Dave's 'Broken Arrow' and Robert Aldrich's 'Bronco'). But the disheartened hero inevitably rides off alone into the distance, turning his back on a world without hope.

"The 'film noir' mixes up goodies and baddies. The genre developed at a time when violence in the real world was rising sharply. Three films launched this glorification of crime - Raoul Walsh's 'White Heat' (1949), Stanley Kubrick's 'The Killer's Kiss' (1956) and Don Siegel's 'The Killers' (1964) - all cynicism, corruption and mindless killing.

Then came the fascination of horror, where human distress became a sort of drug. Since Fritz Lang's 'Dr. Mabuse the Gambler' (1923), there's been a public which loves wallowing in an orgy of the macabre that triumphs over good. Up until and including 'The Clockwork Orange', no principle was spared and morality was rubbished.

"For tolerance, hope and dreams of the future, we should maybe turn to the Indian cinema (the films of Abbas and Guru Dutt), which denounces the restriction of women and the life of street children and depicts human warmth and the imagination of humble folk. One such film, 'Salaam Bombay' won the Gold Camera award at the 1988 producers' Fortnight at Cannes.

Apart from such exceptions, the West knows nothing of Indian cinema, even though with 900 films produced each year, it's the world's most dynamic film industry." ■

● *"Today, people can reach the moon, but it's difficult to reach the person at your side, and this is what I tried to do with my film,"* said **LIV ULLMAN** at the French preview of her first film, "Sofie", at UNESCO Headquarters on January 5. Set in Denmark during the last century, "Sofie" retraces the story of a young, romantic and vulnerable, Jewish woman who dreams of a future radiant and free. But under the pressure of tradition, the passion she discovered rapidly evaporates, leaving her life drab and meaningless: *"My life was a book never opened, only touched."*

LIV ULLMAN (Photo UNESCO/Inez Forbes).

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International Day for the **ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION** will be observed throughout the UN system on March 21.

About 30 experts will exchange information and expertise on **DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION** from April 1 to 14 in Sofia (Bulgaria).

Education, Work and Employment will be the main theme under discussion at the 7th Session of the **INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**, at Headquarters from April 3 to 8. The Commission's Working Group will devote its deliberations to Education and Population in conjunction with UNFPA.

About 35 specialists will attend a meeting on "Education for **HUMAN RIGHTS AND CITIZENSHIP IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**" at the Human Rights Education Centre, Charles University, in Prague (Czech Republic) from April 4 to 7.

OUR NEXT DOSSIER will focus on UNESCO activities in the **MIDDLE EAST**, notably for the preservation of the cultural heritage - in Beyrouth, Cairo, Petra and Jerusalem, and for the installation of educational and communication structures for Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.